



Growing Up With A Healthy Weight

Food Choices & Exercise

Good eating and exercise habits help children grow into and keep a healthy weight. Being overweight can lead to health problems. Your child may not feel well or do well in school.

An overweight child is more likely to be overweight as an adult. Being overweight can lead to heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and diabetes later in life.

An overweight child should not be put on a diet. The goal is to improve eating and exercise habits. This will lead the child to a healthy weight without shame or making the child feel bad. Showing your good eating and exercising habits for your child is important!

Tips Towards A Healthy Weight

Serve Healthy Meals and Snacks

It is important that you buy and plan healthy meals and snacks for you and your child. Use low-fat cooking methods, such as grilling and baking. Avoid fatty cuts of meat, frying foods, and adding extra fat in cooking. Use the Pyramid (www.mypyramid.gov) for ideas on including a variety of foods. With plenty of healthy, lower-fat foods to choose from, your child will form good food habits.

Serve Meals and Snacks At Regular Times

Active children need three meals and two or three snacks daily. Skipping meals or letting your child eat at any time may lead to snacking on high-calorie foods or overeating at the next meal.

Let Your Child Decide How Much To Eat

Learning to eat until full, but not stuffed, is important. Offer, but do not force your child to eat. Give your child a small portion of food and let him ask for seconds if desired.

Comfort Your Child With Love Not Food

Help your child recognize feelings that may be confused with hunger, such as sadness, happiness, boredom, or worry. Do not satisfy those feelings with food. Reward your child with hugs and kisses; comfort with love, activities, and attention. Don't bribe with food!

Do Not Exclude Any Food Entirely

Get away from the good food / bad food idea. Any food is okay once in awhile.

Encourage Your Child To Be Active

Make sure your child is active daily. Make activities fun for your child by encouraging play with siblings, other kids, or parents. Help your child to develop the habit of making regular physical activity a fun part of a healthy lifestyle. Try activities like skipping, tag, leapfrog, climbing, running, duck-duck-goose, and hide 'n seek. Limit TV watching and playing video games.



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